



Illinois Power Company
P.O. Box 511
Decatur, IL 62525-0511

October 1997

Dear Champaign resident:

Illinois Power has been conducting an environmental study on property east of the intersection of 5th and Hill Streets. A manufactured gas plant produced gas at this location from the late 1800s through the 1950s. Illinois Power presently owns the property.

Previous investigations of soil, air and groundwater found tars and other byproducts and residuals at the site. As the enclosed fact sheet explains, the study concluded that there is little risk to residents from these residues.

Beginning this month, we will remove tar and other byproducts and residuals from underground structures and transport the material to our Baldwin Station in southern Illinois, where it will be burned with coal in the boilers. People living and working near the site may notice an odor similar to roofing tar or creosote while work is under way. The odor poses no risk to health. Whenever the byproducts and residuals are exposed during the project, we will monitor the air to ensure a safe environment. We are working closely with the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency on this project, just as we have throughout the study.

The enclosed fact sheet provides more information about the investigation and the removal project, as well as a toll free number you may call if you have any questions. Thank you for your patience and understanding while we take action to ensure the site continues to present little risk to the community.

Sincerely,

Brian Martin

Brian Martin
Senior Environmental Professional

BHM/gm
Enc.

**Champaign Manufactured Gas Plant Site
Status Report
October 1997**

Illinois Power has been conducting an environmental study on property east of the intersection of 5th and Hill Streets in Champaign. Gas was manufactured for lighting, heating and cooking at this location from the late 1800s until the mid-1950s. Illinois Power owns the property, which is currently vacant.

The results of soil, air and groundwater sampling conducted in 1990, 1992 and 1997 indicated that tars and other byproducts and residuals are below the surface of the property and adjacent areas on the north, east and west. While the byproducts and residuals contain chemicals that may be a health risk if people come into direct contact with them over a long period of time, the study concluded there was little risk to the general public from the site in Champaign. The site is fenced to restrict public access, there are no byproducts or residuals on the surface and Champaign's drinking water supply is not affected.

We have been working with the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency since the environmental study began in 1990. IEPA staff have reviewed the reports of the various sampling efforts.

This fall, we are undertaking a project at the site to remove possible sources of contamination. An engineering firm hired by Illinois Power will remove byproducts and residuals from underground structures and cap a storm sewer which is no longer in use under the property.

The Removal Project

In October and November, workers will remove water contaminated with byproducts and residuals from the base of a gas holder, pre-treat it at the site and send it to the community's wastewater treatment plant for disposal. Tars, cinders and fill material will be excavated from the gas holder and from several small tar wells.

Approximately 1,000 cubic yards of excavated material will be blended with coal and lime brought to the site. The mixed material will be tested and the results compared to regulatory standards for nonhazardous waste. Once sampling is completed, the material will be shipped in covered trucks to Illinois Power's Baldwin Station in southern Illinois, where it will be combined with additional coal and burned in the power plant's boilers.

We expect the excavation of material and shipment to Baldwin Station to take approximately 90 days. After the removal project is completed, workers will return to do final grading and cover the excavated areas with either gravel or topsoil. Grass will be seeded in some areas of the property next spring.

The contractor has prepared a health and safety plan and an air monitoring plan to ensure a safe working environment and no off-site health impacts. The IEPA will review and approve plans before the work begins. Workers will wear protective equipment at some points during the excavation, and air monitors will be used whenever byproducts and residuals are exposed to the air. People living and working near the site may notice an odor similar to roofing tar or creosote while work is under way.

A final report of the excavation project will be prepared and submitted to IEPA. This report will help us determine if additional measures are needed to make sure the site poses little risk to the community.

For More Information

We have added a copy of the work plan for the project to the collections of materials about the manufactured gas plant investigation in two Champaign libraries: the Douglass Branch Library at 504 E. Grove Street and the reference department of the main library at 505 S. Randolph Street.

If you have any questions about the project, please call Gretchen Monti, a community relations specialist working for IP. Her toll free telephone number is 1-800-232-3108. Media inquiries should be directed to Shirley Swarthout at Illinois Power in Decatur, 1-800-424-3938.

For information about IEPA's role in the project, you may contact Stan Black, 217-785-1427.